

REMARKS

Claim 13 has been amended to correct an apparent error.

The following remarks are presented in response to the Office Action dated June 8, 2005, requesting a further explanation regarding the patentability of newly presented Claims 13-32 over the Arvidsson patent (U.S. Patent 5,035,446) cited in the initial rejection of Claims 11-12 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b). The following discussion primarily addresses the two independent claims currently pending, namely, Claims 13 and 26.

Independent Claim 13 is exemplified by the structures of Figs. 10-18. In accordance with the invention as set forth in Claim 13, the drive rod of an electric actuator is coupled to an inner steering column member by a bracket structure which is attached to the inner steering column member and which projects through an opening in a sidewall of an outer steering column member. The opening extends along an axial direction of the outer steering column member to accommodate movement of the bracket structure therein during telescopic adjustment of the inner steering column member.

The foregoing arrangement of Claim 13 is neither disclosed nor suggested by the Arvidsson patent. Dependent Claims 14-25, relate to contain preferred

features within the broader scope of Claim 13 and further distinguish from Arvidsson.

Independent Claim 26 is exemplified by the structure shown in Figs. 19-31. In the apparatus of Claim 26, a steering column has a front end rockably supported to a vehicle body and is tiltable integrally with a steering shaft (e.g., the pivotal connection of the steering column to bracket 401c in Figs. 19-21). The apparatus further includes a tilt rocking member rockably supported to the vehicle body and having a slide frame portion formed therein (e.g., tilt rocking member 407 and slide frame portion 410). A slide portion projecting from the steering column is slidably received in the slide frame portion of the tilt rocking member (e.g., slide portion 409). An electric actuator is pivotably coupled to one of the vehicle body and the steering column and has a drive rod which is pivotably connected to the tilt rocking member (e.g., actuator 405 pivotably coupled to the vehicle body through bracket 401b, and actuator drive rod 406 pivotably connected to the tilt rocking member at 408). The drive rod of the actuator is extendable and retractable to effect rocking movement of the tilt rocking member and thereby tilt the steering column and the steering shaft, with the slide portion sliding along the slide frame portion (compare, e.g., Figs. 20 and 21).

There is no teaching or suggestion in Arvidsson of such an arrangement as set forth in Claim 26. Claims 27-32 relate to certain preferred features of the invention within the broader scope of Claim 26 and distinguish even further from Arvidsson.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) be withdrawn and that this application be passed to issue.


The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

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Miles & Stockbridge P.C.
1751 Pinnacle Drive
Suite 500
McLean, Virginia 22102-3833
(703) 903-9000

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Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Mitchell W. Shapiro
Reg. No. 31,568